



اللَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الْحَيُّ الْقَيُّومُ ۚ لَا تَأْخُذُهُ سِنَّةٌ وَلَا نَوْمٌ ۚ
 لَهُ مَا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ ۚ مَنْ ذَا الَّذِي يَشْفَعُ عِنْدَهُ إِلَّا بِإِذْنِهِ ۚ
 يَعْلَمُ مَا بَيْنَ أَيْدِيهِمْ وَمَا خَلْفَهُمْ ۚ وَلَا يُحِيطُونَ بِشَيْءٍ مِنْ عِلْمِهِ إِلَّا بِمَا شَاءَ ۚ
 وَسِعَ كُرْسِيُّهُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ ۚ وَلَا يَئُودُهُ حِفْظُهُمَا ۚ وَهُوَ الْعَلِيُّ الْعَظِيمُ

(Sūratu-l-Baqarah 2:255)

(°āyātu-l-kursi)

allāhu lā °ilāha °illā huwa-l-ḥayyu-l-qayyūm:
 lā ta°kḥudḥḥuhu sinatun-wa lā nawm:
 lahu mā fi-s samāwāti wa mā fi-l-°arḍ:
 man dḥa-l-ladḥī yashḥfa°u °indahu °illā bi°idḥnih:
 ya°lamu mā bayna °aydīhim wa mā ḵalfahum
 wa lā yuḥīṭuna bi-ṣḥay°im-min °ilmihi °illā bi-mā ṣḥāā°a:
 wasi°a kursīyuhu-s-samāwāti wa-l-°arḍ:
 wa lā ya°ūduhu ḥifḍḥuhumā wa huwa-l-°alīyu-l-°aḍḥīm

The Prophet ﷺ commended the recitation of °Āyātu-l-Kursi (2:255), the Verse of the Footstool, saying that he who does so will be under the protection of Allāh, Who will assign a protecting angel to guard him. (al-Bukḥārī 6530)



In the Name of Allāh,
the Merciful, the Compassionate.
bismi-llāhi-r-raḥmāni-r-raḥīm.

Peace be upon you, Oh men of the Unseen!
as-salāmu ‘alaykum yā rijālu-l-ghayb.

Peace be upon you, Oh sanctified spirits!
as-salāmu ‘alaykum yā ‘ayyuha-l-‘arwāḥu-l-mutaqaddasa

Oh chiefs, Oh noblemen,
Oh overseers, Oh spiritual substitutes!
yā nuqāb’u, yā nujabā’u, yā ruqabā’u, yā budalā’u;
Oh pillars of the earth – the four mainstays and supports!
ya ‘awtādu-l-‘arḍu – ‘awtādun arba‘ah:

Oh two leaders! Oh Pole! Oh Singular! Oh trustees!
ya ‘imāman: yā quṭbu yā fardu yā ‘umana’ :

Provide me with assistance, look on me with favor,
‘aghithūni bi-ghawṭḥatin wa-n-ḍhurūnī bi-naḍḥratin

treat me with compassion,
fulfill my wish and my objective,
wa-r-ḥamuni wa ḥaṣṣilu murādī wa maqṣudī
and attend to the satisfaction of my needs,
wa qūmū ‘ala qaḍā’i ḥawāā‘ij(i)

in the presence of our Prophet Muhammad ﷺ
‘inda nabiyyinā muḥmmad ﷺ
(ṣalla-llāhu ‘alayhi wa ahlihi wa sallam)

May Allāh ﷻ grant you peace
in this world and the next.
sallāma-kumu-llāhu ta‘ala fi-d-dunya wa-l-‘ākḥira

O Allah, bestow blessings on al-Khidr!
allāhumma ṣalli ‘ala-l-kḥidr

(Ṣhayḵ ‘Abd al- Qadi Jilani’s ﷺ salutation to the *Rijalu-l-Ghayb* ﷺ)

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ
 السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكُمْ يَا رِجَالَ الْغَيْبِ، السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكُمْ يَا أَيُّهَا
 الْأَزْوَاجُ الْمُقَدَّسَةُ، يَا نُقَبَاءَ، يَا نُجَبَاءَ، يَا رُقَبَاءَ، يَا بَدَلَاءَ،
 يَا أَوْلَادَ الْأَرْضِ أَوْ تَادَّ أَرْبَعَةً، يَا إِمَامًا، يَا قُطْبَ، يَا فَرْدَ،
 يَا أُمَمًا، أَغِيثُونِي بِغَوْثَةٍ وَانْظُرُونِي بِنَظَرَةٍ وَارْحَمُونِي
 وَحَصِّلُوا أَمْرًا دِينِي وَمَقْصُودِي وَقَوْمُوا عَلَيَّ قَضَاءَ حَوَائِجِي
 عِنْدَ نَبِيِّنَا مُحَمَّدٍ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ. سَلِّمُوا عَلَى اللَّهِ تَعَالَى
 فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ، اللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلَى الْخَضِرِ.

At all times an established number of individuals serve as members in the spiritual administration of human and world affairs. It is due to their intervention and presence that this world is kept spinning on its axis. A saying of the Prophet ﷺ testifies to this: “The world shall not perish as long as even a single person says ‘Allāh, Allāh’”. This is a reference to those chosen ones who due to their constant and pure remembrance have attained to the station of nearness to the Divine Presence. These privileged souls have been appointed to their stations and ranks by the Will of the Almighty. They maintain balance and equilibrium in the dispensation of world affairs. It is for their sake that Allāh ﷻ eases His Wrath and bestows His Mercy. Rain is made to descend and fields turn green in answer to their supplications. These people of special Grace are not known to the common folk, and are called the Rijāl-u-l-Ghayb (the hidden or invisible men or souls) and are hidden because humanity is going through a cycle of ignorance and violence and people have lost the sensory organs needed to recognise them lest the Rijāl be persecuted or confused with those external powers that organise human communities socially or politically.

The 12 Chiefs (*nuqāb*³) are the Holders of Sacred Power and intervene in the affairs of the world to prevent ignorance-bred injustice and violence from entirely invading the earth. The 8 Nobles or honorable, chosen ones (*nujabā*) have no earthly power but are the holders of sacred knowledge, and their function is to safeguard and transmit initiatory science. Ibn °Arabi said, “Know that every city or province has its own *najīb*.”

Also the chiefs (*nuqāb*³) and the nobles (*nujabā*) secretly direct humans towards knowledge of the reality of the Hidden °Imām ﷺ – they call out to him, they identify him, and make him known to those who need to know.

The Exchanged or Alternates (*budala*) are 7 and they possess the power to change from their physical to their spiritual forms; also they can substitute a replica or ‘place holder’ so exactly like themselves in form and movement that no one can distinguish the replica from the real person.

The term derives from the Arabic (*budīla*/بدیل) to change or substitute and each of them are placed over one of the seven heavenly spheres.

The 4 *awtād* (tent poles or stakes), control the four corners of the world on behalf of the Ghawṭh. Ibn ʿArabi said of them, “Through the ʿawtād, Allāh ﷻ preserves and protects the south, the north, the east and the west.” They are in charge of looking after these four directions or dimensions. Their number is confirmed in every age.

The 2 leaders (ʿimāman) are ʿAbdu-l-Mālik and ʿAbdu-r-Rab. and after the death of the Quṭb one of these two succeeds him as the Quṭb and, in turn, one of the ʿawtād advances to be one of the two ʿimāman. Simultaneously one of the alternates (*budala*) moves to replace the graduated *awtād*. These two ʿimāms or leaders are constantly in attendance on the Quṭb and in, and at, his service.

The Quṭb, often called al-Ghawṭh (he who helps or he who brings the rain), is the center of the whole hierarchy. The Quṭb as such is the Central Pole of the ʿawliyāʾ. The one person who forms the focus of the supervision by Allāh ﷻ of the world in every age. He belongs to the heart of ʿIsrafil ﷻ (the angel of resurrection and of form) and he is entrusted with the high station (*wilayatu-l-kubra*) as chief of the ʿawliāʾu-llāh ﷻ .

The ʿafrād (sing. *fard* or *mufrad*), are the Unique or Solitary Ones who receive illumination directly from Allāh ﷻ and stand equal to the Quṭb but are not under the direct supervision of the Pole and have no specific function such as that possessed by the Quṭb. The ʿafrād are also aware that they undergo constant fluctuation of knowledge in every breath. The chief of the ʿafrād is al-Khidr ﷻ who drank the Water of Life and still manifests to initiate the holy ones into the Hidden Truths. He is always in this world and has been given ‘insight of the heart’ which is the direct knowledge from the Presence of Allāh ﷻ (*ʿilm min ladunnā*/علم من لدنا).

The Trustees (ʿumana) are the custodians of virtue who have responsibility for temporal affairs and are extremely pious people who never make their religious experiences known. They sometimes are known as the *Malamatiyah*, or those who are willing to undergo mis-representation, or even court it, rather than boast of, or even be known for, their piety.

In general Allāh ﷻ conceals His friends from the people (*al-ʿamm*) and only gives information about the ʿawliyāʾ to either others of the ʿawliyāʾ or those who are able to obtain benefits from them. We have written this only to clarify some terms used in the *duʿāʾ* and Allāh ﷻ knows the Truth.

أَلَا إِنَّ أَوْلِيَاءَ اللَّهِ لَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ

alāa ʿinna ʿawliyā-llahi lā khawfun ʿalayhim wa la hum yaḥzanūn

“Surely, the friends of Allāh
will feel no fear and will know no sorrow.”

(Sūrah Yunus 10:62)

